

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TANANA 01782 191654Z

44

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CCO-00 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01 L-03

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 NEA-10 PA-04 PRS-01 DRC-01

/106 W

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Z O 191540Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO COMIDEASTFOR FLASH

SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 5872

INFO USS ADAMS IMMEDIATE NIACT

USS MCCANDLESS IMMEDIATE NIACT

USS KOELSCH IMMEDIATE NIACT

USS BRUMBY IMMEDIATE NIACT

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE NIACT

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG PRIORITY

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA PRIORITY

CINCLANT FLT NORFOLK VA PRIORITY

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1782

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, ENRG, MA, US

SUBJ: DIEGO-SUAREZ TURNOVER

REF: TANANARIVE 1779, 191335Z DEC 73

1. MALAGASY FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR OF BILATERAL RELATIONS
RATSIMANDRESY RECEIVED ME AT 1645 LOCAL DEC 19 TO DISCUSS
TURNOVER PROBLEM. WAS EXTREMELY APOLOGETIC FOR MANNER IN WHICH
GOMR HAD HANDLED MATTER BUT INSISTED, FOR POLITICAL REASONS,
DECISION TO DENY AUTHORIZATION COULD NOT BE REVERSED.
STATED IT NOW GOMR POLICY THAT NO FOREIGN WARSHIP (EXCEPT
PRESUMABLY FRENCH) BE ALLOWED VISIT MADAGASCAR UNTIL AFTER
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MIDEAST CRISIS SETTLED. EXCEPTION CANNOT BE MADE.

2. RATSIMANDRESY ASKED ME TO BELIEVE GOMR IS CONCERNED ABOUT SAFETY OF SHIPS AND PARTICULARLY OF LIVES. HE MADE SUGGESTION WHICH I TOLD HIM I FELT WAS TECHNICALLY INFEASIBLE AND PROBABLY POLITICALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO USG AS WELL. AM, NEVERTHELESS, PASSING IT ON FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH.

3. FOLLOWING IS HIS SUGGESTION:

COMIDEASTFOR SHOULD MAKE ARRANGEMENTS DIRECTLY WITH MARINE DIEGO TO HAVE FRENCH NAVY REFUEL AMERICAN SHIPS DISCREETLY AND TRANSFER MAIL, BUT OUTSIDE DIEGO-SUAREZ BAY. MALAGASY GOVT WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTIIN TO AMERICAN SHIPS ENTERING MALAGSSY TERRITORIAL WATERS SO LONG AS ATTENTION NOT DRAWN TO THEM. IF SUBSEQUENTLY QUERIED, GOMR WOULD REPLY FRENCH WERE REFUELING AMERICAN SHIPS ON ROUTINE BASIS AND GOMR NOT INVOLVEDBMUM

4. AM CONVINCED RATSIMANDRESY WOULD NOT HAVE MADE ABOVE SUGGESTION WITHOUT FIRST CONSULTING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER, BUT CANNOT BE ABSOLUTELY SURE.

5. FOR SECSTATE: BELIEVE FOLLOWING ABOVE SUGGESTION WOULD STILL INVOLVE CONSIDERABLE BUT NOT IRREPARABLE POLITICAL RISK EVEN IF FEASIBLE. THERE IS, OF COURSE, NO ASSURANCE FRENCH WOULD ACCEPT IN VIEW THEIR TENUOUS POSITION MADAGASCAR. REGRETFULLY CONCLUDE, EMBASSY TANANARIVE HAS EXHAUSTED ALL POSSIBILITIES OF GETTING GOMR CHANGE MIND.
MATHERON

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